

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 EUR-12

TRSE-00 SAM-01 ARAE-00 /071 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7104

INFO SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NASSAU 1357

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR BF US

SUBJ: FACILITIES NEGOTIATIONS

REF: A. NASSAU 1350 B. NASSAU 447 C. NASSAU 1120

1. FOLLOWING ARE EMBASSY'S PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON GCOB NOTE
ON FACILITIES NEGOTIATIONS TRANSMITTED TO DEPT. BY REF A:

(1) NOTE IS OBVIOUS ATTEMPT BY GCOB TO PUT IN WRITING WHAT
THEY HAVE MAINTAINED ORALLY FROM THE BEGINNING, I.E. THAT
ECONOMIC AND SECURITY INTERESTS ARE IN THEIR VIEW INSEPERABLE
AND THAT OUR ACCEPTANCE OF THIS LINKAGE IS A PREREQUISITE TO
SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS. THIS RESPONSE, ALTHOUGH OVER A YEAR
IN COMING, WAS CERTAINLY NOT UNEXPECTED AND HOLDS NO SURPRISES.
NOTWITHSTANDING COINCIDENCE OF NOTE'S ARRIVAL DURING LOBSTER
TALKS, EMBASSY SEES NO SPECIAL LINKAGE BETWEEN THESE TWO ISSUES
BUT RATHER FEELS THAT TIMING MORE NEARLY REFLECTS APPROACHING
CONCLUSION OF UK/GCOB DEFENSE TALKS AS REPORTED IN REFS B AND C.

(2) DESPITE UNEQUIVOCALITY OF ECONOMIC/SECURITY LINKAGE,
THE NOTE IN EMBASSY'S VIEW IS NEVERTHELESS AMBIGUOUS WITH REGARD
TO EXACT MEANING OF "ECONOMIC INTEREST." FROM OUR READING,
IT REMAINS UNCLEAR WHETHER GCOB IS THINKING MERELY IN TERMS
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OF BASE RENTAL, WHETHER THEY SEEK A MORE GENERALIZED FORM OF

ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, WHETHER THEY WANT BOTH, OR WHETHER GENERAL ASSISTANCE WAS ADDED AS A BARGAINING TACTIC TO RAISE THE FINAL RENTAL BILL. IT IS HOPED THAT INFORMAL EXPLORATORY CONVERSATIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE WILL PROVIDE A BETTER CLUE TO BAHAMIAN THINKING.

(3) IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE GCOB'S DEMONSTRATED INCAPACITY TO FOCUS ON MORE THAN ONE MAJOR ISSUE AT A TIME, IN ORDER NOT TO CONFUSE THE CURRENT LOBSTER NEGOTIATIONS WITH FACILITIES NEGOTIATIONS, AND AS NO IMMEDIATE ANSWER IS REQUIRED, GIVEN 31 DECEMBER TARGET DATE, EMBASSY SEES NO REASON FOR A HASTY RESPONSE AND IN FACT RECOMMENDS THAT WE TAKE OUR TIME IN FORMULATING REPLY. THIS HAS THE VERY REAL ADVANTAGE OF GIVING US MORE TIME TO PIN DOWN JUST WHAT QUID IT IS THAT THEY HAVE IN MIND.
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Message Attributes

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